



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM UPDATE

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs

March 31, 2003
0900 hrs.

Situational Update

- Coalition forces targeted the Ministry of Information in downtown Baghdad at 6:00p.m. EST yesterday to reduce the Hussein regime's command and control capabilities.
- For the first time in military history, multiple B-1, B-2 and B-52 long-range strike aircraft targeted the same geographical area at the same time as part of a single strike package. After launching from separate bases, the bombers simultaneously struck leadership and command and control targets of the Iraqi regime in Baghdad using precision munitions.
- Fifteen V Corps soldiers were examined for injuries after a third country national drove his truck into them while they were waiting in line at the Camp Udairi post exchange. The driver of the truck was shot by one or more uninjured soldiers. Fourteen soldiers were treated and returned to duty. One soldier received an injury to his knee and will be flown to Germany for treatment. His name is being withheld pending notification of next-of-kin.
- Early Saturday, U.S. Marines from Task Force Tarawa secured buildings occupied by elements of the Iraqi 11th Infantry Division here. Marines of 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, commanded by Lt. Col. Brent Dunahoe, secured the buildings during a raid and found a large cache of weapons, ammunition, and chemical decontamination equipment. Marines of 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, commanded by Lt. Col. Royal P. Mortenson, found a second cache of weapons in a building on the south side of the city. In the largest building the Marines found and confiscated over 300 chemical suits, over 300 gas masks, atropine injectors, two chemical decontamination vehicles and other chemical decontamination devices.

Important Transcripts

Secretary Rumsfeld Remarks on ABC "This Week with George Stephanopoulos"

: 3/30/03

http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2003/t03302003_t0330sdabcsteph.html

Key Points

On Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"The plan is a good one -- and I would be happy to take credit for it because it's an outstanding plan and it's going to work, and we're going to win -- but the reality is it's a plan that was developed by Gen. Franks. It was worked through the Chiefs of Staff in Washington. It was looked at carefully by the combatant commanders around the world. It's been through the National Security Council. It is our country's plan, and it's a good one, and it's working."

"It is important that the people of Iraq be liberated. It's also important that we do it in a way that we feel comfortable with as a country. So it's not just that we win, it's also how we win. And if you think about it, the Iraqi people are in large measure hostages to that vicious regime. We can do this, and we can do it, I hope and pray, with limited loss of innocent lives."

- Secretary Rumsfeld, 3/30/03

On The Way Ahead

"There are difficult days ahead. And to the extent the Republican Guard pose difficulties, which we expect them to, there will be dangerous days ahead. Baghdad is not going to be easy. But the outcome is certain, and at some point the Iraqi people will end up fearing Saddam Hussein and his regime less, and they will end up anticipating liberation and freedom more, and it will end, and it will end successfully."

- Secretary Rumsfeld 3/30/03

Today in DoD

A DoD press briefing is scheduled for this afternoon. Participants and time TBD.

Press briefings may be viewed on Senate Channel 27 or House Channel 24.

For Press Secretary or MLA Inquiries on Current Operations:

Call Legislative Affairs (703) 697-6210

Or Refer To:

www.defenselink.mil/la or www.Defendamerica.org

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